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# The Founding of the Christian Church.

## An Inductive Study of the Primitive Era, 30-100 A. D.

IN FIFTY LESSONS.

PREPARED BY CLYDE W. VOTAW, CHICAGO, ILLS.

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### LITERATURE OF THE COURSE.

NOTE.—The Outline or framework of this Course was published in the December number of the *STUDENT*, pp. 353-357.

Only the books most serviceable for this Course need be mentioned. Prices given are list prices, which can generally be discounted from ten to twenty-five per cent. The books can be obtained through any bookseller or publishing house.

**I. Commentaries on Acts.** The best large works are those of *Gloag* (Clarks, 2 vols., \$8.40), and *Meyer* (Funk & Wagnalls, \$2.00). The best small works are the *Cambridge Bible on Acts*, \$1.10, and the *International Revision Commentary on Acts* (Scribners, \$1.25). Others of high value are by Hackett (\$2.00), and Abbott (\$1.75). A score of others are more or less useful.

**II. Histories of the Period.** The most important are those of *Neander*, *Planting and Training of the Christian Church* (Bohn ed., 2 vols., \$2.80), and *Schaff*, *History of the Christian Church*, Vol. I. (Scribner's, \$4.00). Others of high value are by *Duff*, *The Early Church* (Clarks, \$4.50), *Baumgarten*, *The Apostolic History* (Clarks, 3 vols., \$9.00), *Lechler*, *Apostolic and Post-Apostolic Times* (Clarks, 2 vols., \$6.00).

**III. Biographies of Paul.** The best large works are those of *Conybeare and Howson* (Longmans, \$2.25; Scribners, \$3.00), and *Farrar* (Dutton, \$2.00). The best small works are by *Stalker* (Clarks, 60c.), and *Tuerach* (Randolph, \$1.00). There are many others of considerable interest and value.

**IV. Introductions.** The best large Introduction to the New Testament Literature is that by *Weiss* (Funk & Wagnalls, 2 vols., \$4.00). Second to this is the work of *Salmon* (Scribners, \$3.50). The best small Introduction is that of *Dods* (Whittaker, 75c.). Excellent also are those of *Farrar*, *Message of the Books* (Dutton, \$1.50), and *Hyde*, *New Testament Introduction* (Revell, \$1.00). A new work of first importance by *Salmond* is soon to be published.

**V. Special Treatises.** Concerning particular portions or aspects of the history, the best books are: *Fisher*, *Beginnings of Christianity* (Scribners, \$2.50); *Farrar*, *Early Days of Christianity* (Cassell, 75c.); *Paley*, *Horae Paulinae* (75c.). Others of value are: *Stokes*, *Acts of the Apostles*, Vol. I. (Armstrongs, \$1.50); *Vaughan*, *Church of the First Days* (Macmillan, \$2.75); *Matheson*, *Spiritual Development of St. Paul* (Randolph, \$1.75); *Bernard*, *Progress of Doctrine in the New Testament* (Carters, \$1.25). Most important also are the articles in the following: *Smith's Bible Dictionary*, *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, 9th ed., and *Sunday School Times*, Vols. XXV.-XXVII. (1883-5).

**VI. Works on the Epistles.** Three classes: (1) Introductions, as above, also in works of *Neander*, *Conybeare and Howson*, *Farrar*, and in *Bible Dictionary* and *Encyc. Britannica*. Fine Introductions to the Epistles by *Gloag* (Clarks, 3 vols., \$11.50); also *Godet*, *Studies in the Epistles* (Dutton, \$2.00). (2) Serial Commentaries, covering all the Epistles. The best large work is that of *Meyer* (Funk and Wagnalls); the best small works are the *Cambridge Bible*, the *International Revision Commentary*, *Ellicott's Handy Commentary*. Midway, and of high value, is the *Expositor's Bible*. Other good serials are the *Pulpit Commentary*, the *Bible Commentary*, and *Lange's Commentary*. (3) Special commentaries on particular epistles, of first value, are by *Beet*, *Delitzsch*, *Ellicott*, *Godet*, *Lightfoot*, *Westcott*, and others, which will be discussed in connection with the later treatment of the Epistles.

**VII. The Student's Equipment.** The student should at the least provide himself with the *Cambridge Bible on Acts*, *Dods' Introduction* and *Stalker's Life of Paul*: total, \$2.45. Much better would it be to have *Gloag's Commentary*, *Weiss' Introduction*, and *Conybeare and Howson's Life of Paul*: total, \$15.40. To these might well be added: *Neander's Planting and Training of the Christian Church*, and *Fisher's Beginnings of Christianity*. Then *Gloag's Introductions to the Epistles*, *Cambridge Bible on all the Epistles*, *Schaff's History of the Christian Church*, Vol. I. These are the most important and useful works for the Course. Bible Clubs and Sunday Schools should provide a library of these books for the use of their members. Pastors will gladly arrange so that individuals can have access to their books. Use books by all means, after thorough study of the Scripture itself.

## PRELIMINARY SUGGESTIONS.

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**1. Aim and Spirit.** The aim of this study is intensely practical; the knowledge sought is not to be sought for its own sake, but that Christianity may to-day be better understood and practiced after seeing it as it was understood and practiced by the first Christians. The spirit to be maintained in the study is that of reverence, docility, candor, scholarly investigation, with patience and determination to complete the work begun.

**2. Amount of Time.** The Course, which consists of fifty studies, extends over two years, and is in two parts. (This makes them parallel with the New Testament International S. S. Lessons of 1892-3.) Each study, therefore, will be given two weeks. The student in the simpler Progressive Grade should not be satisfied with less than ten hours (that is, forty minutes each day) upon each Study. For the Advanced Grade fifteen hours (an hour a day) would be desirable. In both grades a much larger amount of time would be very profitably spent. Let each student set aside and consecrate a certain portion of his day to this work.

**3. Manner of Pursuit.** The Studies are adapted to the use of individuals, Bible Classes, Bible Clubs, Teachers' Meetings, Young Peoples' Meetings, Normal Classes, Y. M. C. A. Classes, etc. Four ways of pursuing the Course are possible for the student: (1) As a regular correspondence student of the *American Institute of Sacred Literature*, in which case he will have the skilled assistance and instruction of the *Institute* at every step of the Course. (2) As a member of a Bible Club, whose leader will be in closest connection with the *Institute*, and furnish to all its direction and assistance. (3) As one of a class or organization, using the published Studies as the basis of their work, but pursuing it independently. (4) As a private student, taking the Course alone and working it out without further direction or help. But the student is recommended to avail himself, if possible, of either the first or second method, as being the most satisfactory and profitable.

**4. Record of Work.** One-half of the usefulness of this Course will be lost if the student fail to keep a clear, systematized record of the information and results attained. These may be kept: (a) In one or more note-books, carefully classified; (b) on uniform blank sheets which can afterward be arranged and bound. Each step of each Study will furnish material to be recorded: (1) First Step: Facts (a) The transcript of each passage, in the student's own language, kept in exact order, will reproduce the whole Books of Acts in the student's own words—a most valuable piece of work. (b) An analysis, or table of contents, of the Acts to be kept, containing the Scripture divisions, sub-divisions, and paragraphs, with their respective headings. (2) Second Step: Explanations. Preserved: (a) In a note-book, under the respective texts; or (b) upon the blank sheets, the Scripture passage being cut from small cheap Testaments, and glued to the left of the page, while the words explained are underscored, the explanation being written opposite each to the right. (3) Third Step: Topics. The discussion preserved: (a) In a note-book, under the respective texts. (b) On the blank pages below the respective passage and explanations.

(4) Fourth Step: Observations. Preserve additional ones: (a) Upon the margin of the lesson leaf; or (b) in a note-book or upon blank sheet, properly arranged. (5) Fifth Step: Summary. All facts, teachings and truth gleaned, must be classified and stored away under appropriate headings, in note-book or upon blank sheets. The Summary must be a complete view of the history, development and teaching of the Christian Church during this period. (6) Sixth Step: Teachings. To be treated as Observations above.

**5. Abbreviations.** A. V.—version of 1611. R. V.—version of 1881. Ch.—chapter. V.—verse. Vs.—verses. Chapter nos. in bold face, verse nos. in light face, thus: **18: 27.** 22f.—ch. or v. 22 and 23. 22ff.—ch. or v. 22, 23 and 24. 22sq.—ch. or v. 22 and those following indefinitely. 22a, 22b, 22c=v. 22, first clause, second clause, third clause respectively. Commentaries always referred to by author's name *in loc.*, i. e. under each specific text. Other books by author's name, vol. and page, thus: Neander, II. 97, of edition named in the table of literature preceding. *Italics* are not used for emphasis.

# Course and Chronology of the Christian Church, 30-100 A. D.

PREPARED FOR BIBLE CLASS USE BY C. W. VOTAW.

IN ALL THE KNOWN WORLD.	IN ROME, AND POSSIBLY SPAIN.	IN ALL GREECE.	IN ASIA MINOR.	IN PALESTINE.	IN JER'LEM.	A. D. 30	DAY OF PENTECOST. MAY 28, ETC.
						31	Rapid Growth. Community of Goods.
						32	INAUGURATION OF DEACONS.
						33	Miracle-working, Growth, Persecution.
						34	PREACHING, TRIAL AND MARTYRDOM OF STEPHEN.
						A. D. 35	CONVERSION OF PAUL.
						36	MISSION WORK IN SAMARIA AND ELSEWHERE.
						37	Arabian Sojourn of Paul.
						38	Office of Elder Established, exact Time uncertain.
						39	Paul's First Visit to Jerusalem since Conversion.
						A. D. 40	PETER'S MISSIONARY TOUR AMONG THE PALESTINIAN CHURCHES.
							PETER AND CORNELIUS. UNIVERSALITY OF THE GOSPEL RECOGNIZED.
						41	Church increasing and spreading rapidly.
						42	ESTABLISHMENT OF THE ANTIOCH CHURCH.
						43	Paul's Work at Antioch. Rise of the term "Christians."
						44	Martyrdom of James. Death of Herod. Barnabas and Paul at Jerusalem.
						A. D. 45	PAUL'S FIRST EVANGELIZING TOUR.
						46	Paul's Precedence. Churches Founded in Cyprus and South-east Asia Minor.
						47	
						48	
						A. D. 50	No record of events here. Paul's Tour may have lasted longer, and the Jerusalem Conference may have taken place as early as 50.
						51	THE CONFERENCE AT JERUSALEM.
						52	PAUL'S SECOND EVANGELIZING TOUR. Re-visitation in Asia Minor. 18 mos. in Corinth.
						53	I. and II. Thessalonians written from Corinth.
						54	
						A. D. 55	PAUL'S THIRD EVANGELIZING TOUR. Re-visitation in Asia Minor. Nearly 3 years at Ephesus.
						56	Galatians and I. Corinthians written from Ephesus.
						57	Re-visitation in Macedonia. II. Corinthians written from there.
						58	Romans written at Corinth. Fifth Visit to Jerusalem. Arrest at Pentecost.
						59	
						A. D. 60	TRIPLE TRIAL OF PAUL AND THE CAESAREAN IMPRISONMENT.
						61	Colossians, Philemon, Ephesians, perhaps written at this time from Caesarea.
							Voyage to Rome. Shipwreck. Winter at Melita.
						62	PAUL'S FIRST ROMAN IMPRISONMENT.
						63	Philippians written.
						64	Epistles of James, Peter and Jude of uncertain date, perhaps about this time.
						A. D. 65	PERIOD OF PAUL'S RELEASE.
						66	Visit to Greece, Asia, and possibly Spain.
						67	I. Timothy and Titus written, place uncertain. Hebrews written about this time.
						68	SECOND IMPRISONMENT AND EXECUTION. Revelation of John written, II. Timothy written during the Second Imprisonment.
						69	Jewish War in Progress since 66.
						A. D. 70	FALL OF JERUSALEM—DESTRUCTION OF THE TEMPLE.
						72	
						74	Many hold that the Synoptic Gospels were written or received their present form during these ten years. Also the Book of Acts then written.
						76	
						78	
						A. D. 80	JOHANNINE EPISTLES, I., II. AND III. JOHN, WRITTEN ABOUT THIS TIME FROM ASIA MINOR.
						82	
						84	
						86	
						A. D. 90	
						92	
						94	THE GOSPEL BY JOHN WRITTEN ABOUT THIS TIME FROM EPHESUS.
						96	Death of the Apostle John about this time.
						98	
						A. D. 100	CLOSE OF THE PRIMITIVE APOSTOLIC ERA.

The Chronology at some points is conjectural. See table of variations in Meyer's Com. and Farrar's Life of Paul. The Chronology here presented is that adopted by Meyer, Weiss, Farrar, et al. An attempt has been made to show roughly the relative importance of events by the relative sizes of type.

## STUDY I.

## SEC. 1. THE HISTORICAL RECORDS TO BE USED.

## I. THE ACTS OF THE APOSTLES.

BIBLIOGRAPHY.—(1) Cambridge Bible on Acts, pp. 9-39; (2) Bible Dictionary, art. Acts; (3) Dods' N. T. Introduction, pp. 63-75; (4) *Encyc. Britannica*, art. Acts, by Prin. J. Donaldson; (5) *Fisher's Beginnings of Christianity*, pp. 299-317, the Book of Acts; (6) Weiss' N. T. Introduction, Vol. II., pp. 314-355; (7) Lindsay's Comty. on Acts, Vol. I., pp. 11-34; (8) Meyer's Comty. on Acts, pp. 1-13; (9) Gloag's Comty. on Acts, Vol. I., pp. 1-33.

## FIRST STEP: CONTENTS.

1. Read through the Book of Acts carefully at one sitting (sixty to ninety minutes), to obtain a connected, comprehensive view of the entire writing.
2. Read the Book a second time, noting any natural divisions into which the material falls; for instance, chs. 1-12, Peter the chief figure; chs. 13-28, Paul the chief figure. Or, chs. 1-7, the Church in Jerusalem; chs. 8-15, the Church in Palestine and Syria; chs. 16-20, the Church in Asia and Europe; chs. 21-28, Paul's Imprisonment.
3. *Upon the basis of the divisions chosen, make out a tentative analysis of the Book. Use the Revised Version. Note under each division heading the main topic or topics treated in each chapter (or paragraph, if you have time to go into such detail), and put with each its proper reference. (See Preliminary Suggestions.) This synopsis will be indispensable to the highest success in the further study.*
4. Make out a tentative list, in the order of their importance, of the twelve Christian workers most prominent in the Acts. How many of these were original Apostles, and whence came the others?
5. *Consider the title of the Book, "Acts of the Apostles:" (a) Decide whether, for the contents of the Book, this title is too comprehensive, or too limited, or both. (b) Word a title that will exactly represent the contents. (c) How came the present title to be as it is?*

## SECOND STEP: PURPOSE.

1. From your examination of the Book of Acts, state: (a) Your conception of it as an historical writing. (b) Of what, exactly, it is a history. (c) Some of its chief characteristics and peculiarities.
2. *As to its contents, consider: (a) How it came about that years so full of important events and developments were so scantily recorded. (b) As far as you can judge, has the author told all that he could ascertain, or did he from a large mass of material make a selection? (c) If the latter, what was the purpose, and what the principles, of his selection?*

(Study I.)

3. *Compute roughly the proportion in the Acts of three historic elements:*  
 (a) *The narrative of events.* (b) *The record of speeches and sermons.* (c) *Direct doctrinal teaching.*
4. What, as you understand them, were the chief purposes of the author in preparing the Book of Acts? If possible, unify these into one comprehensive, supreme purpose.

## THIRD STEP: COMPOSITION.

1. Date—When was the Book of Acts written? Consider: (a) The period of time which it covers. (b) The year in which it stops, cf. Acts 28:30. (c) The abruptness of its close. (d) *Its relation of subsequence to the third Gospel.* (e) *The bearing of the authorship on the date.* (f) *The familiarity of the author with contemporary history and circumstantial details.* (g) *Absence of reference to the destruction of Jerusalem.* (h) *Or to the Pauline epistles.* (i) *Or to the heresies of the latter part of the first century.* (j) Is 66 A. D., or thereabout, a time which best accords with all the facts and conditions, for the composition of Acts? (k) *State the arguments which favor a later date, 80 A. D., or thereabout.*
2. Place—Where was the Book written? (a) Is there certain evidence? (b) How is this question connected with that of authorship? (c) *Any light from the fact that it was addressed to Theophilus?* (d) *Does the Book impress one as belonging to a Gentile atmosphere?* (e) If Luke was the author, where was it probably prepared (cf. Phile. 24, 2 Tim. 4:11), in Italy, Greece, or Asia Minor?
3. Destination—For whom was the Book written? (a) Why addressed to Theophilus? (b) Was it only for him? (c) Was it mainly for him? (d) Is there anything to indicate that it was for a particular church or section? (e) What characteristics of the Book give the impression that it was for the whole Church of his own and of later years?

## FOURTH STEP: AUTHORSHIP.

1. Who is generally understood to be the author of the Acts? What other Book did he write? Give all the arguments, in the order of their value, which support his authorship of the Acts: (a) Its relation to the third Gospel, incontestably by him. (b) The "we" passages, in which the writer is manifestly of the apostolic company, and the probabilities all point to Luke, cf. Acts 16:8ff; 20:5f; 27:1. (c) The usage and testimony of the early Church Fathers. (d) *References to Luke in the epistles which show that he was closely related to Paul in his work (Col. 4:14; Phile. 24; 2 Tim. 4:11).* (e) *The integrity of the Book.* (f) *The medical phraseology (cf. Acts 3:7; 12:23; 13:11; 28:8), which suggest a physician as author, which Luke was (Col. 4:11).*
2. *Can any considerable evidence be adduced that another than Luke, e. g. Timothy, Silas, Titus, was the author of the Acts?*
3. *Where there is no good reason for denying that a writing is authentic history, just how important is the question of authorship? Supposing the author of the Acts were unknown, would the value and*  
 (Study I.)

*authority of the Book be lessened? If so, how, and why? What bearing has this decision upon the problem of authorship regarding other books of the Bible?*

#### FIFTH STEP: SOURCES.

Consider three sources from which Luke drew his material for the Book of Acts :—

1. Written documents, similar to those which he had before him in preparing the Third Gospel (Lk. 1:1). These, as is apparent from the Hebraized style, were the basis of the early portion of Acts, with which period he was not himself connected, directly or indirectly. *Were these documents merely strung together, or were they properly worked over for the author's purpose? What evidence from similiarity of style through the Book?*
2. Oral testimony, source of the middle and a little of the latter portion of the Book, gained particularly from Paul, also from others, e. g. Philip at Cæsarea (Acts 21:8f).
3. Personal observation and knowledge, from which chs. 16, 20, 21, 27, 28, and perhaps 22-26 were written, indicated by fulness of account and by first personal pronoun.

#### SIXTH STEP: STYLE.

1. Consider the leading characteristics of Luke's style as a writer, as seen from the Gospel and the chapters of Acts for which he was his own source, e. g. smoothness of his Greek, his theoretical manner, his graphic description, his tendency to hyperbole, his use of technical terms, his peculiarities of vocabulary, and so forth.
2. Consider the leading characteristics of his style as an historian, e. g., faithfulness to details; verisimilitude of the speeches; large information as to the history he treats, fine historic sense in his selection and arrangement of facts, and in his supreme purpose for composing the historic work.

(Study I.)

## STUDY II.

### II. THE EPISTLES AND REVELATION.

**BIBLIOGRAPHY.**—(1) Teachers' Editions of the Bible, Appendix giving brief, valuable synoptical view of all the Epistles (Oxford ed., pp. 47-50); (2) Bible Dictionary, article on each Epistle; (3) Hyde's N. T. Introduction, pp. 60-110; (4) Dods' N. T. Introduction, pp. 76-247; (5) *Encyc. Brittanica*, article on each Epistle; (6) Fuller treatment of all the Epistles in Weiss' N. T. Introduction, in Conybeare & Howson's *Life and Epistles of St. Paul*, in Neander's *Planting and Training of Christianity*, in Farrar's *Life of Paul and Early Days of Christianity*; (7) Complete treatment in commentaries on individual books. (See *Literature of the Course*).

(Study II.)

## FIRST STEP: NUMBER AND ORDER.

1. Make a complete list of the New Testament Epistles, in the order in which they come. (a) How many are there in all? (b) Which are the longest ones, which the shortest? (c) *About what is the average length, in number of pages?*
2. Consider whether the Revelation might fitly be classed with the Epistles. (a) *What is the purpose and what are the characteristics of a "catholic" epistle, so-called?* (b) *In what respects does the Revelation coincide with these?* (c) *Was the Revelation given and recorded as an inspiration to hope and perseverance on the part of the Christians in the time of their severest persecution by the Roman power?* (d) *Is it then proper to treat the Revelation as essentially a catholic epistle, though of course with a substance and character all its own?* (e) *So considering it, how many epistles in all?*
3. Classify the Epistles under three heads: (a) Those addressed to particular churches, e. g. Romans. (b) Those addressed to the Church at large, e. g. Hebrews. (c) Those addressed to individuals, e. g. Philemon.
4. Observe carefully the order in which the Epistles are arranged in the New Testament. (a) *Discover if possible the reasons for the present order: is it chronological, or logical, or according to the importance of each, or accidental, or what?* (b) *Since the canon began to form, what different arrangements have been used, and why?* (c) *Compare the arrangement adopted by Westcott and Hort in their Greek Testament, and discuss it.*

## SECOND STEP: AUTHORS.

1. Classify the Epistles of the New Testament according to their various authors: (a) How many, and which, were written by Paul? (b) By James? (c) By Peter? (d) By John? (e) By Jude? (f) *By unascertained writers?*
2. Consider these authors collectively. (a) How many, and which of them, belonged to the original Twelve? (b) Which of them were own brothers of Jesus (cf. Matt. 13:55; Mk. 6:3)? (c) Give a brief biography of each author individually, showing his relation to the Church and his fitness for writing to the Christians. (d) *Who are suggested as possible authors of the Epistle to the Hebrews?* (e) *What is the origin and value of the superscription in our English Bibles which attributes the Epistle to Paul?* (f) *Consider as far as it may be profitable and interesting, the arguments which favor the Pauline authorship; those which indicate Apollos as writer of it.*

## THIRD STEP: GROUPS.

With the general knowledge which you already have of the epistles, freshened by rereading as many of them as practicable, and with the information obtained from the helps to this study, proceed as follows:—

1. Group all the Epistles (exclusive now of the Revelation) into two classes: (1) The Paulines—13. (2) The non-Paulines—8. (a) *What are some*  
(Study II.)



*of the distinguishing features of the Pauline class? (b) Of the non-Pauline class?*

2. Consider a subdivision of the Pauline class. (a) 1 and 2 Thess., discussing the Second Advent. (b) Gal., 1 and 2 Cor., Rom., discussing the Way of Salvation. (c) Col., Phile., Eph., Phil., discussing the Person of Christ. (d) 1 and 2 Tim., Tit., discussing Pastoral Duties. Observe that this is both a chronological and a logical grouping. Try to grasp it fully.
3. Subdivide the eight non-Pauline Epistles into two groups—the Major and the Minor (more important, less important). (a) Major—Heb., Jas., 1 Pet., 1 Jno. (b) Minor—2 Pet., 2 and 3 Jno., Jude. Make as careful a comparative study as may be practicable of the writings of the three men—James, Peter and John. Determine the characteristics of each as author.

#### FOURTH STEP: PURPOSE AND CHARACTERISTICS.

1. The Purpose. (a) Generally speaking, what was the purpose that the several authors had in mind in writing their Epistles? (b) Besides an immediate purpose to make their influence felt in their absence, was there a further purpose to perpetuate for the Church the phases of practical and doctrinal Christian truth which they had worked out, e. g. Romans, James, *et al.* (c) What was the relation of written to oral teaching at that time? (d) How would the rapid spread of Christianity, the difficulties of travel, and the scarcity of able teachers, tend to induce written instruction? (e) *Are we to suppose that all the epistles which were written for the primitive Christians have come down to us? Why were not more written and preserved?*
2. Consider, and as far as possible illustrate, the following characteristics of the Epistles as a whole. (a) They are veritable letters, written under special circumstances to meet special needs. (b) They set forth applied Christianity in the concrete; not an abstract system of theology or Christian doctrine. (c) Each is interpenetrated with the personality of its author, e. g. how largely our knowledge of Paul and James come from their epistles. (d) *Certain principles of practice they enjoin are now obsolete, e. g. 1 Cor. 11:3-16; 14:34f., and the return of fugitive slaves (Phile.)* (e) *They vary largely in their value for practical Christian use.* (f) They were exceedingly influential in the primitive Church, as now they are.

#### FIFTH STEP: COMPOSITION.

1. From the chronological chart, learn the date at which each of the Epistles was written, getting firmly in mind their chronological relation to each other. *Where dates are in dispute, consider the arguments for others than those given.*
2. Ascertain, where possible, the place from which each epistle was written and sent out. *In the case of some of the Pauline epistles it may even be known who carried and delivered them.*
3. Learn to whom each epistle was written, and the particular occasion for writing.

(Study II.)

4. *Observe carefully the close association of the Pauline epistles with the historical events of his life. Illustrate from 1 and 2 Thessalonians and Philippians.*
5. *Consider the language in which the Epistles were composed, and the literary style of the several authors?*
6. *Examine, as you may have time, the question of canonicity as it concerns the Epistles.*

#### SIXTH STEP: THEMES.

From your general knowledge, and such study as is now possible, make out a list of the main themes of Christian instruction which are presented in the Epistles. Classify them in your own way, or as follows:—

1. Christian Doctrine. Concerning: (a) The Second Advent. (b) The way of salvation. (c) The resurrection. (d) The person of Christ. (e) The relation of Christianity to Judaism. (f) The relation of Christianity to Paganism, etc., etc.
2. Christian Practice. Concerning the duty of the Christians: (a) Toward God: faith, dependence, service, etc. (b) Toward the world: separateness, evangelism, etc. (c) Toward each other: love, charity, assistance, etc. (d) Each toward himself: purity, uprightness, industry, soberness, etc.

(Study II.)

### STUDY III.

## SEC. 2. GENERAL SURVEY OF THE COURSE.

**BIBLIOGRAPHY.**—(1) Fisher's *History of the Christian Church*, pp. 7-44, *The Apostolic Age*; (2) *The Beginnings of Christianity* (same author), pp. 546-580, *Christianity in the First Century*; also pp. 469-505, *Separation of Church from Temple*, and pp. 506-545, *Spread of Christianity in the Apostolic Age*; (3) *Encyc. Britannica*, art. Christianity, by Prof. T. M. Lindsay; (4) *McClintock and Strong's Cyclopædia* (also *Bible Dict.*) art. *Apostolic Age*.

#### FIRST STEP: USE OF THE HISTORICAL RECORDS.

How shall the two sources of historical material for this study be used: (a) Each account individually. (b) The two accounts in their relation to each other.

1. Consider the character of the material given by the Acts as compared with that given by the Epistles. (a) What proportion of the contents of the Acts is narrative (circumstantial), and what proportion is doctrine (direct instruction of whatever sort)? (b) What are the corresponding proportions in the contents of the Epistles?
2. Formulate: (a) Some statement which will express the relation of the Acts' history to that given by the Epistles: e. g., the Acts record the external history (the outward conditions, relations, and circumstances), while the Epistles record the internal characteristics of the life, growth,

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- and teaching of the Christian Church. (b) *The reasons for these two essentially different aspects of the history, considering that the Epistles helped make the history, while the Acts only record it.*
3. *Having in mind the authorship, time and circumstances of composition of the Epistles, as compared with the Acts, which source should occupy the first place of authority in matters of harmonization, and state reasons why.*
  4. Think out carefully several principles which are to be constantly applied in the conjoined use of the historical material given by the Acts and by the Epistles.

#### SECOND STEP: TIME SURVEY.

1. Make a thorough study of the preceding Chronological Chart, noticing carefully: (a) Every event. (b) Its date. (c) Its chronological relations to other events. (d) Its logical relations to other events. (e) Its relative importance as compared with them (roughly shown by size of type). (f) The position and significance of each event relative to the whole era of history as a unit.
2. Photograph the Chart upon the mind, if possible, and memorize the dates of the following events: (a) The beginning; and (b) The close of this primitive era of the Christian Church. (c) The Martyrdom of Stephen. (d) The Conversion of Saul. (e) Reception of Cornelius. (f) Paul's First Evangelizing Tour. (g) The Jerusalem Conference. (h) Paul's second Evangelizing Tour. (i) Paul's Third Evangelizing Tour. (j) Paul's Roman Imprisonment. (k) The Fall of Jerusalem. (l) The Death of the Apostle John. Twelve dates in all; hold them permanently in mind.
3. *If desired, a study of the chronology may be made. In general it is very clearly fixed, but in detail it is uncertain, and variations of a few years as to the time of nearly all the events are common: e. g. The Jerusalem Conference is placed at 50, or 51, or 52, by different calculators. The passages which furnish the basis of calculation, together with the side-lights from contemporary history and the arguments for the various chronologies maintained, will be found presented in any commentary on Acts or Life of Paul. See especially Meyer's Comty., pp. 13-22, Hackett's Comty., pp. 20-25, Conybeare and Howson's Life and Epistles of St. Paul, Appendix I.-III., pp. 821-838.*

#### THIRD STEP: GEOGRAPHICAL SURVEY.

The geography of the Primitive Church history is a prominent and interesting feature. The Book of Acts is framed upon the geographical extension of Christianity, a fact which it is important to keep in view.

1. Observe, on the extreme left of the Chronological Chart, the five distinct steps of geographical progression represented. Study this carefully, noting: (a) The dates over which each step extends. (b) The circumstances attending each advance. (c) The rapid expansion of Christianity from the Holy City, Jerusalem, until it takes possession of the whole civilized world.

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2. Sketch a map of Asia and Europe, on which pictorially represent this spread of Christianity by five concentric circles (Jerusalem centre), numbered according to the steps of extension.
3. *With the aid of the Chart and Outline, go through the Book of Acts, marking: (a) How this geographical expansion constitutes the frame-work of the Book. (b) The points in the Book at which each advance is made into a wider territory.*
4. *Read, if possible, Prof. Fisher's chapter on the Spread of Christianity in the Apostolic Age. (See Bibliography above.)*

FOURTH STEP: ANALYSIS OF THE ERA.

We are endeavoring to grasp the frame-work of the Primitive Era of the Christian Church, and to get a bird's-eye view. Having taken the chronological and geographical surveys, the next step is a logical survey.

1. Learn the four divisions of this Primitive Era, and the portion of the Acts, with the several Epistles, which treat of each one.
2. Study the Outline until you can see clearly just the ground that is to be traversed, and are satisfied that you can fit the details, as you come to them, into their proper places, and in their right perspective.
3. *Endeavor to understand the principles upon which this analysis of the Era has been made. Does it reach the fundamental facts and truths of the history? If not, wherein does it fail?*

FIFTH STEP: MAIN THEMES TO BE INVESTIGATED.

After careful deliberation, make out a list of subjects which you think ought to be discussed, and in which you are interested, concerning the Primitive Christian Church. Some of them may be these:—

1. The condition of the Pagan world which Christianity was about to conquer.
2. The leading Christian workers, and the conceptions which they had of the Gospel.
3. The relation of the Church to the ecclesiastical and civil powers, and to the common people.
4. The form of Church organization, as it was at first, and as it developed during the era.
5. The rites and services of the Church.
6. Christian teaching and preaching, and their developments.
7. The relations of the Christians to one another.
8. The individual lives of the Christians, as affected by the Gospel.
9. The growth of the Church, its increase of numbers, extent and strength.
10. The difficulties which the Church had to meet and overcome.
11. The evidences of God's continual presence with Church.
12. The significance in history of this Primitive Christian Church, and its teaching to us as individual and organized Christians.

Let as many more themes as possible be added, and let the student take up this study with the resolution and expectation that these questions shall be answered.

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## SIXTH STEP: THE METHOD.

1. To traverse the ground discovered by this general survey will be no small or light undertaking. But courage and enthusiasm should only mount the higher. The study will be of incalculable interest and benefit, for it will inspire to the right understanding, the living and the spreading of Christianity. This intensely practical aim is essential.
2. The inductive treatment given the history will be seen to contemplate :  
(a) The individual facts which make up the history. (b) The accurate and complete understanding of these facts. (c) The facts in all their relations, so organizing all the material that the historical period may be viewed in its true unity and perspective. (d) The vital lessons of belief and practice which the history contains for men to-day.
3. The student should enter into the full spirit and purpose of the Course, with a willingness for long, patient, faithful work, and with a sincere, consecrated determination to comprehend and to religiously experience the first years of Christianity, when it was implanting itself and taking possession of the world.

(Study III.)